

# YULE CAT

*CR 8 FIEND FROM ICELANDIC MYTH*



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### SPECIAL THANKS

All you wonderful people of Twitter!



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**T**HE YULE CAT IS AN ICELANDIC CHRISTMAS myth that originates from a good long while ago, back to before the Icelandic Yule Lads suffered the fate of capitalism. Back then, the mischievous Yule Lads were not the kind-hearted Santa-replicas they are today, who give gifts to good children and old potatoes to the naughty ones in the 13 nights leading up to Christmas Eve. No, back then, the Yule Lads were mischievous and even cruel, stealing food, harassing sheep, and appearing as creepy faces on the outside of your window on a cold winter's night.

Their mother, the troll named Gryla, was the worst. Before they just left old potatoes in your shoes for being naughty (don't ask), Gryla would come to town and snatch any misbehaving child, put them in her sack, and bring them back to her home for eating. Gryla's cruelty is legendary in Iceland and all children should rightfully fear her. Despite all that, and perhaps to add to her hag-like features, Gryla has a cat. This cat has no name but is known only as the Yule Cat. In all stories, the Yule Cat is massive and has jokingly been referred to as a mount for the Yule Lads to ride into towns. This fiendish cat would lurk around the snowy countryside in winter, stalking any unfortunate soul who did not get any new clothes before Christmas Eve. Those who became its prey were not brought home to Gryla, but eaten by the Yule Cat instead.

## THE YULE CAT IN D&D

In DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, the Yule Cat appears as a freakishly large cat. Although legends about this monster certainly exists to the point where your characters might have heard of this creature, it is known to prefer the cold weather during winter solstice and that is when it is known to be prowling the countryside.

Despite its appearance, the Yule Cat has a far more sinister origin than a mere giant beast. The monster is of fiendish nature, producing tales that it is really Gryla's familiar. The Yule Cat is lithe for its size and has been known to sneak up on a party of adventurers before springing onto them and ripping them apart.

The story of how the Yule Cat only eats a person who hasn't gotten any new clothes before the winter solstice plays a larger part here than most realize. It is true that the Yule Cat primarily hunts the poor, but that is because they are easier to hunt in dirty old clothes. The monster has a keen sense of smell and finds the taste of despair more appetising than the taste of wealth and perfume. If no other food is available though, the Yule Cat won't be too picky to eat a wealthy merchant.

It has been believed to be bad fortune to look the monster in its eyes and it is all too true in this case. The Yule Cat's eyes glow red and anyone who meets its gaze risk suffering paralyzing fear.

Beyond all that, the Yule Cat is a stealthy hunter. It will creep up on unsuspecting prey in the night, and as their hair begin to stand on end and terror shoots down their spine, the Yule Cat has been known to tear through carriages and wooden buildings to snatch its next meal.

## THE YULE CAT IN EBERRON

Stories of Gryla and her kin place them in either the Demon Wastes or the monster nation of Droaam. The Yule Cat has been known to stalk both places. It is known to be most active in the winter months of Vult, Zarantyr, and Olarune, especially when food is otherwise scarce, and can be found stalking nearly all of Khorvaire during this time.



## PLOT HOOKS

Most plots involving the Yule Cat would take place during the winter months, but the monster can certainly be confronted at any time of the year.

You can use these sample plot-hooks to get a game started that focuses on the appearance of the Yule Cat. Either roll 1d6 or choose one that you like.

### YULE CAT PLOT-HOOKS

| 1d6 | Plot-Hook   |
|-----|---|
| 1   | After winter solstice, the disappearances of the poor who live out in the have forced the local lord to seek the assistance of adventurers to investigate and put an end to the threat, whatever it may be.   |
| 2   | Days leading up to the winter solstice sees people frantically shopping to clothes as stories of a fiendish cat circulates. Are the stories about the Yule Cat true, or are they just stories for greedy merchants to sell clothes at a higher price?           |
| 3   | A small town has failed to produce any new clothing and beg the visiting party of adventurers to help them fight off the inevitable arrival of the Yule Cat.  |
| 4   | The adventurers must find Gryla but she makes her home where only the Yule Cat can travel. If the adventurers can either trick or tame the massive fiend, they might use it to get to Gryla.  |
| 5   | One thing more terrifying than seeing the hulking form of the Yule Cat prowling the countryside is to not see it. The Yule Cat hasn't been seen all winter and a local lord wants to confirm that it's truly gone before settling in a false sense of security. |
| 6   | Stories abound that the Yule Cat is about to have kittens. Few things sound as terrifying as a whole litter of fiendish cats roaming around and the adventurers must figure out how to handle this.   |





## YULE CAT

Huge Fiend (cat), Chaotic Evil

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 105 (10d12 + 40)

**Speed** 30 ft.

| STR     | DEX     | CON     | INT    | WIS     | CHA     |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 21 (+5) | 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) | 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

**Saving Throws** Dex +7, Con +8

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +7

**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 120 feet, passive Perception 14

**Languages** Cat; understands Common, Abyssal, and Giant but can't speak

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Cat Paws.** The Yule Cat has advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

**Keen Smell.** The Yule Cat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Magic Resistance.** The Yule Cat has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Paralysing Gaze.** If a creature starts its turn within 30 feet of the Yule Cat and the two of them can see each other, the Yule Cat can force the creature to make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw if the Yule Cat isn't incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature is paralysed for one minute. It can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On a success, the effect ends.

A creature that isn't surprised can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its next turn. If it does so, it can't see the Yule Cat until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If it looks at the Yule Cat in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

**Pounce.** If the Yule Cat moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the

same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the Yule Cat can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

### ACTIONS

**Multiaction.** The Yule Cat makes three attacks: Two with its claws and one with its bite.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 15) if the Yule Cat isn't already biting another creature, and the target is restrained until this grapple ends.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 5) slashing damage.

**Swallow.** The Yule Cat can swallow a medium creature or smaller that it has grappled by its bite attack. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the Yule Cat, and it takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the Yule Cat's turns. The Yule Cat can only have one creature swallowed at a time.

If the Yule Cat takes 30 points of damage or more on a single turn from the swallowed creature, the Yule Cat must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate the creature, which falls prone in a space within 10 feet of the Yule Cat. If the Yule Cat dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The Yule Cat can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Yule Cat regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Bite or Claw.** The Yule Cat makes one bite attack or one claw attack.

**Invisibility (Costs 2 actions).** The Yule Cat casts *invisibility* on itself without requiring any components.